



Literacy Matters

Opening the World Through Words!

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER BY **OAKLAND LITERACY COUNCIL** AUTUMN 2016

cor·nu·co·pi·a

*,kōrn(y)ə'kōpēə/
noun*

an abundant supply of good things of a specified kind.



Autumn is generally the season of “Giving Thanks” and celebrating the good in all of us. There is now scientific proof that shows being thankful throughout the year has tremendous benefits on your quality of life. Gratitude might just be the most overlooked tool that we all have access to each and everyday.

Scientists report that gratitude opens the door to more relationships; improves psychological health; enhances empathy and reduces aggression; makes you sleep better; improves self-esteem; and increases mental strength.

At the Oakland Literacy Council our **cornucopia** of thanks is endless. We are thankful to our tutors our students, our staff, our Board of Directors (including our newest board member Candy Geeter), our office volunteers, our sponsors, our friends and our donors.

We are thankful for the kind words, the kind gestures, the extra effort. We are thankful for our multitude of resources and materials we have on hand, the local libraries and coffee shops. We are thankful for the smiles, the applause and the enthusiasm. We are thankful for the successes, the stories and the entire Oakland Literacy Family!

"To educate yourself for the feeling of gratitude means to take nothing for granted, but to always seek out and value the kind that will stand behind the action. Nothing that is done for you is a matter of course. Everything originates in a will for the good, which is directed at you. Train yourself never to put off the word or action for the expression of gratitude."

Albert Schweitzer

A Few Words.....by Judy Lindstrom



I looked out the window this morning watching the falling leaves and realized that we are quickly closing the chapter on October. I am reminded of one of my favorite lines about this lovely season-- "Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower." Albert Camus.

With autumn comes a flurry of activity. Of note is our recent 27th Ex Libris event raising more than \$36,000! This event continues to amaze us as it brings out the best in everyone. Our donors heeded our call and gave generously. They are: Rita-Ann Lindstrom, Oakland County Michigan WORKS, Judy Lindstrom. Eleanor and Bernard Robertson. Barbara Van Dusen, Carol and Jay Herbst, ISQUARED, Inc., Kemp, Klein, Umphrey, Endelman and May Foundation, Metro Detroit Book and Author, Sarah and William Birkhill, Camille and Donald Breen, Judith Bryce, Comerica, Ellie and William Couch, Gretchen and Ethan Davidson, Robert Gaylor and Gregory Barnas, Barbara and Edward Klarman, Oakland Community College, Oakland Press, PVS Nolwood, Mary Rosenbusch. Ralph Tennant and Woodward Camera.

Our tutor speaker, Adelia Cooley and her student, Ossie Tate made us proud to be part of the OLC family. Author Johnathan Rand, our key note speaker, brought this evening to a fitting conclusion with his life stories. Applause, Applause and thank you to all involved.

Judy Lindstrom



L to R: Johnathan Rand, Gloria Johnson, Adelia Cooley and Ossie Tate

Kudos
Korner

Celebrating our student's
many milestones!

Congratulations!!

To **Atsushi Fujino** who accomplished his goal of being able to make travel reservations by phone, which is a lot harder than doing it online.

To **Irina Vertiagina** who passed her test for a green card and the written test for a driver's license.

To **Igor Shturnak** who learned about a city job at the Madison Heights City Hall. On his own, he wrote and practiced a script, and then went to the City Hall to inquire about the job. Even though the position had been filled, he had a great conversation.

To **Taeok Jin** who placed her restaurant order with a waitress in English, and made a telephone call to PetSmart to set up appointments for her dog, SooBong.

To **Wenqin Gao** who fixed a lawn mower after researching the problem online in English and viewing an instructional youtube video.

To **Jeun Kim** who registered for a fall term class at Eastern Michigan University.

"The world is moving so fast these days that the man who says it can't be done is generally interrupted by someone doing it." Albert Hubbard

FUN NEW "READS" FOR YOUR STUDENTS

Great news! A number of new books are available in the office that should provide fun, interesting reading for students of all levels.

The books include:

- Biographies to appeal to everyone, ranging from J K Rowling and Babe Ruth to Ronald Reagan and Queen Elizabeth
- "Who?" "What?" and "Where?" books such as "What is the Super Bowl?", "Why do Dogs Bury Bones?" and "Where is the Grand Canyon?"
- Classics like *Swiss Family Robinson*, *Anna Karenina*, and *Around the World in 80 Days*
- Contemporary reads including *Jurassic Park*, *The Horse Whisperer*, and several John Grisham titles
- Various other fun novels -- even "Chick Lit"!

Check them out! (literally)



Welcome Aboard!

We are happy to welcome Amy Gould to the OLC family. Amy provides a friendly face and a killer sense of humor to the office. She has a Master's degree in College Student Personnel and has spent much of her career in higher education with stints at the University of Michigan, Northwestern University, Savannah College of Art and Design and Bowling Green University. Much of that time was spent developing student learning experiences with community based nonprofits.

Amy also was also an English Conversation Teacher in Japan. She is a mom of two young children, wife of Adam who teaches cinema studies at Oakland University, and a Rochester resident. The next time you call in or stop by the office make sure you introduce yourself to Amy!



These are the ladies who make it all happen! Pictured above is the staff of Oakland Literacy Council: From the left--Executive Director Lisa Machesky, Student Coordinator Kim McKnight, Office Manager Amy Gould and Tutor Coordinator Suann Darmody.

*Information
Technology*

E-learning

*Learning
Anywhere*

21st Century Learning Comes to OLC

We are pleased and proud to introduce the new eLearning Tutor Training Orientation.

Until now, future tutors have been required to complete all of their training on-site. That, however, entails a big commitment of time and requires them to deal with the hassles of scheduling and driving. These barriers could be enough to dissuade a potential tutor from joining our organization. This eLearning orientation makes it convenient to learn more about the organization, and provides information that can help someone decide whether becoming a tutor is the right decision for them. This is an important step for OLC because more and more people have become accustomed to learning online.

The goal of the course is to give a prospective tutor an understanding of the OLC as an organization, to demonstrate the responsibilities and heartfelt rewards of being a tutor, and to provide a snapshot of our students' literacy journeys. After completing the course, a prospective tutor will be able to decide if they want to continue and sign up for classroom training.

The eLearning orientation features videos that show current OLC students and tutors discussing their experiences. The online program is engaging and fun, featuring activities and quizzes. Feel free to take the class yourself by going to the OLC website and scrolling down to the course link.

Meet the Designer: Joan Allesee

Former tutor and trainer Joan Allesee has taken her love of tutoring to the next level. After receiving her Master's Degree in Instructional Design, she immediately put her new skills to work in support of literacy.

About 1 ½ years ago, Joan started thinking about the tremendous benefits eLearning could bring to OLC. Being a tutor herself, she saw how online, interactive learning could attract and educate new tutors by presenting our great content in a new and engaging way. The benefits of this kind of digital training are numerous. It is self-paced, low-cost, and presented in a format that increases retention and is in alignment with how businesses and educators are using technology in learning.

This has been a very rewarding project for Joan. Being a tutor trainer and a tutor gave her key insights on how to develop the course. "This is a ground-breaking piece of technology," said Joan, "that will enhance the organization's ability to recruit tutors and to bring donors into the realm of what we do. I am so happy that I was able to pitch in a little more to help the OLC continue its wonderful mission in Oakland County."



Have you Heard?.....It's Tutor Time!

Tutors gathered on the morning of Saturday September 24, to connect, discuss experiences, share strategies, and hear about the happenings at Oakland Literacy Council. Gatherings like this, facilitated by our new Tutor Coordinator Suann Darmody, are a great way to share information. Connecting with others reinforces that our tutors are part of a great dedicated team and have lots of support. Following are a few of the great tips that were shared:

- Meeting your student for the first time? Above all – relax! Remember that your student will be at least as nervous as you are. Be prepared to tell them a little about yourself. Ask them about their interests, and find books at the library on those subjects. Prepare to be exhausted after that first session!
- Does your student need more opportunities to speak English? Most of our students speak English only with their tutors, and find speaking with others to be challenging. Technology offers some great alternatives in the form of apps that are easily accessed on their phones. Check out Voice of America, Speak English Daily, and Learn English Daily.
- Field trips offer fun new learning opportunities. Take your student on a trip to the local farmers' market, coffee shop, grocery store, or restaurant. This can help them use their English skills, and will give you as the tutor an understanding of how they use and understand the language.
- Libraries offer many great teaching tools. Walk through the library pointing things out to build your student's vocabulary. Have them check out ESL tapes or movies with English subtitles. Encourage them to attend library ESL sessions. Use maps as a conversation prompt; explore the student's home country, the tutor's heritage or other states of prior residence, vacation spots, etc.
- Here's a challenge that will be fun for student and tutor alike. Turn the tables and have your student teach something to you! Who knows what fun and interesting things you might learn?

What do Hugh Jackman, J. K. Rowling, Billy Crystal, Sting, Sheryl Crow, Jon Hamm, Clarence Darrow, Art Garfunkel, Roberta Flack, and Stephen King have in common with our amazing tutors? Before they were famous, they were teachers and tutors! They too know the extraordinary connection between student and tutor.

Right Around the Corner!

One only has to turn on the television to realize the holiday shopping blitz is upon us. There are lots of opportunities for you to tackle your lists while also raising funds to support Oakland Literacy Council programs.

- Buy your Thanksgiving turkey, Halloween candy, holiday eggnog and gift cards at Kroger, and they will donate a portion of the proceeds. Sign up at <https://www.kroger.com/enrollCommunityRewardsNow>
- Christmas or Hanukkah gift shopping? There's something for everyone at Amazon! Make your purchase on www.amazonsmile.com instead of amazon.com, and OLC will benefit.
- Books are always a popular gift. Buy them at Barnes and Noble in Troy on December 11 (or the subsequent 5 days online), when they will be hosting an OLC fundraising bookfair. Make sure to stop by and say "hello".

Congratulations to our New Tutors!

We are thrilled to introduce the newest additions to our OLC family.

The following people completed their tutor training in September:

Allison Bliss
John Davis
Leslie Hall
Ginger Ketleson
Maurice Lefford
Ann Manning
Gregory Rice

Eleven new tutors (pictured) graduated in October:

Elizabeth Brown *
Gail Flemming *

Diane Hults
Francine Klein *
Michelle Morath
Rita Moulton
Jeanette Ragsdale *
Audrey Robinson
Danielle Todd
Carole Wollard*
Pastor Robert Wollard *

Among the October graduates (marked with an asterisk) were six people from the St. Andrew Parish in Waterford. What a great way to give back to the community! If your church might have interest in encouraging members to become tutors, please contact Lisa.

